

Worcester Sidbury site 1976 (excavator M.O.H. Carver)

A total of six pits from the upper layers (16-17th century) of the excavation were investigated in the 1976 season. Samples were taken from the pits to determine whether macroscopic remains could give an indication of their former use. The deposits examined were wet but by no means waterlogged. Sample size varied usually the amount was such that it would approximately half fill a bin liner type plastic bag. The samples were washed in warm water, the lumps being broken up manually. They were sieved through a 300 μ sieve. The remains that were caught on the sieve were paraffined and after this process the float was immersed in alcohol. A low power microscope was used when sorting the material. Other macroscopic remains were separated from the dried residue of the paraffining process.

Pits examined

Feature	F I7	context	I027	Date	CI6 - CI7
"	FI9	"	I035	"	CI6
"	F41	"	I088	"	mid CI7
"	FI05	"	I217	"	late Medieval
"	FI48	"	I274	"	possibly late Saxon
"	FI81	"	I320	"	" Roman

Seed lists

Pit FI7

Carex disticha Huds.	Brown sedge	3	In damp grassy places, fens, marshes and wet meadows.
Carex flacca Schreb.	Carnation grass	I	In dry calcareous grassland, damp clayey woods, marshes, fens and bogs.
Carex hostiana DC.	Tawny sedge	M	A plant of wet flushes and marshy ground, where water contains high % bases.
Carex cf. otrubae Podp.	False fox sedge	2	On clayey soils usually in damp grassy places, rarely in dry places.
Hypericum cf. tetrapterum Fr.	Sq. stemmed St. John's wort	I	In damp meadows, grassy places beside rivers and ponds and in marshes.
Juncus sp. indet.	Rush	M	Marsh land.
Ornithopus perpusillus L.	Birdsfoot	2	In dry sandy and gravelly places.
Ranunculus lingua L.	Great spearwort	2	A local plant of marshes and fens.
Trifolium repens L.	White clover	I	In grassy places, particularly common on clayey soils.

Pit FI9

Chenopodium album L.	Fat hen	4	In waste places and cultivated land.
Euphorbia helioscopia L.	Sun spurge	2	Common in cultivated and waste ground.
Polygonum minus Huds.	Small water-pepper	I	In wet marshy places beside ponds and lakes.
Ranunculus cf. repens L.	Creeping buttercup	I	Common in wet meadows, pastures and woods.
Sambucus nigra L.	Elder	7	Woods, scrubs and waste places especially on disturbed base rich and nitrogen rich soils.

Other macroscopic remains

Fish vertebrae and fish scales.

Teeth, one cow molar and possibly one dog molar.

Some matted fibres, which could have been hairs.

Bones, fragments of ribs of small animals.

Pit F41

Carex cf. nigra (L)Reichard	Common sedge	4	Usually in mires or bogs with some degree of water movement.
Fragaria vesca L.	Wild strawberry	M	Woods, scrubs in base rich soils and on basic grassland.
Rubus fruticosus (agg.)	Blackberry	M	Woods, scrubs hedges and heaths.
Sambucus nigra L.	Elder	I	Woods, scrubs and waste places etc.
Schoenus nigricans L.	Bog rush	4	In damp, usually peaty, base rich places.
Vitis vinifera L.	Vine.	I3	Mostly grown in warm, temperate or tropical regions.

Other macroscopic remains

One vole skull.

Associated small animal bones.

Fish bones, including vertebrae with spines (suggesting Stickleback) and fish scales.

Matted hairs and feathers.

Egg shell.

Pit FI48

Carex cf. appropinquata Schumacher		I	In fens and damp places, on base rich peaty soils.
Chenopodium cf. polyspermum L.	All seed	2	In waste places and cultivated land.
Conium maculatum L.	Hemlock	II	In damp places, open woods and near water.
Rubus fruticosus (agg.)	Blackberry	M	Woods, scrubs, hedges and heaths.

FI48 contd.

Sambucus nigra L.	Elder	4	Woods, scrubs and waste places etc.
and:-			
Avena sativa L.	Oats	2	Cultivar.
Secale cereale L.	Rye	I	"

Other macroscopic remains

Fish vertebrae.

Caddis-fly larvae cases.

Bone fragments, small animal bones and also the limb bone of a large bird possibly a goose.

Pit FI8I produced 2 charred grains of Triticum cf. aestivum, beside this nothing of environmental importance.

Pit FI05 also failed to produce macroscopic plant or animal remains except for large quantities of charcoal.